

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I appreciate his leadership on this issue, and I appreciate the chairman of the committee being willing to accept the restatement of existing law.

But I think it is important for this Chamber to acknowledge that there is a scandal brewing. The news accounts make clear what our committee system has not yet focused in on. There are, in fact, numerous cases that are being brought forth of torture and the horrendous practice of our sending people to other countries after we have kidnapped them knowing that these suspects are going to be tortured.

There are reasons that we are against torture. There are moral reasons. There are legal reasons. There is the fact that it is not a good way to get intelligence information and that it taints any legal proceedings that we may have against suspected terrorists. There is a selfish reason, that it puts Americans at risk. We do not want to show the world that it is acceptable treatment of civilians or people in the military that they be tortured.

We have been trying to get Congress to do its job in oversight in this area, to investigate, so that we do not have to rely on journalists and nongovernment organizations but that Congress steps forward, that we understand and are held accountable. Until Congress takes its responsibilities seriously to investigate what is going on and, if there are abuses, to hold people accountable, I join my colleague in supporting this amendment because it is the best we can do.

But I want to make clear that it is not good enough and that every Member of this assembly ought to be clamoring for the appropriate committees to exercise appropriate oversight to make sure that we are not complicit in the abuse and terror and torture of other people.